

Appendix W: Threatened & Endangered Species Specific Coordination & Conservation Measures

It is the intent of the BLM to strive toward actions that have no effect on listed species, or effects that are insignificant, discountable, or beneficial. When this is not possible, implementing the following species-specific conservation strategies in the Kremmling RMP Decision Area is intended to minimize adverse impacts that are likely to result from implementing the management actions provided in the RMP. This appendix discusses conservation measures that are specific to each federally-listed threatened or endangered species. In addition, the BLM has committed already to implementing many conservation measures; many of these measures are from statewide Biological Assessments and Biological Evaluations for individual species. The BLM also will consider implementing any appropriate stipulations, conditions of approval, or best management practices to further protect a species and its habitat (see Appendixes B, D, and E). In the event new populations of a species are discovered, these measures will apply until such time as further investigation and subsequent consultation with the USFWS may result in more appropriate management prescriptions. The measures identified below are not comprehensive. Additional conservation measures or modified versions may be applied for any BLM-authorized activity upon further analysis, review, or Section 7 consultation with USFWS.

North Park Phacelia, Kremmling Milkvetch, and Penland Beardtongue

Surveys will be conducted in suitable habitat before project approval. If any populations of North Park Phacelia, Kremmling Milkvetch, or Penland Beardtongue are discovered, separate Section 7 consultation will be completed at the project level. Conservation measures will be developed during the consultation process to protect these species and their habitats. Examples of conservation measures are listed below.

- All BLM-issued fluid mineral leases will include a notification that T&E species may be present on the lease and that mitigation/conservation measures may need to be developed. Additional conditions of approval beyond the options for a 60-day delay in starting new surface disturbance operations and 200-meter relocation of proposed operations (which are consistent with lease rights) will potentially be required when listed or candidate species occur within the action area.
- Surface disturbing activities in occupied or suitable habitat will be preceded by a current-year survey and a separate Section 7 consultation, if necessary.

- The BLM will stipulate fugitive dust control methods through the NEPA process and implement them on permitted actions and activities occurring on public lands, to prevent or minimize any adverse effects on federally listed plants.
- Protections for federally listed plants will include appropriate measures to protect specific, pollinating species where known and identified by the USFWS.
- Projects that remove topsoil in areas of suitable habitat for listed plants will set aside and replace the topsoil when groundwork is completed, to preserve the seed bank and associated mycorrhizal species.
- When possible, re-vegetation of surface disturbance will be limited to native species that will not compete with the rare species at that site, to avoid introducing competitive species. Re-vegetation projects will require a site-specific plan for areas with listed plant species, to be developed in consultation with the USFWS.
- “Translocation” will not be used as a rationale to defend a “not likely to adversely affect” or a “no effect” finding for any federally listed plant species.
- Prior to any land tenure adjustments in known habitat for North Park Phacelia, Kremmling Milkvetch, or Penland Beardtongue, the BLM will survey to assess the habitat boundary and retain that area in federal ownership. BLM-administered public lands that contain identified habitat will not be exchanged or sold, unless it benefits the species.
- To the extent practicable, all proposed ROW projects (e.g., power lines, pipelines, and roads) will be designed and locations selected at least 200m from any occupied habitat to minimize disturbances. If avoidance of adverse effects is not possible, the BLM will initiate consultation with the Service.
- Travel management plans will include management direction to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on North Park Phacelia, Kremmling Milkvetch, or Penland Beardtongue.
- When possible, recreational site development will not be authorized in occupied habitat.
- Livestock grazing will be managed within occupied habitat from June through July for the Kremmling Milkvetch and Penland Beardtongue and July through August for North Park Phacelia, to allow plants to bloom and go to seed.
- A Section 7 consultation will be conducted for any livestock grazing permit renewals in allotments containing occupied habitat for these species.
- Use data will be collected to ensure all livestock management practices and operations (e.g., grazing intensity, distribution, confinement, location of salt, and range improvements), will benefit or not adversely impact federally listed plants.
- The BLM will implement fire management practices and protection (plant locations will be made known to resource advisors of wildfires) to enhance the conservation of federally listed plant species (e.g., refueling sites or fire camps will not be established in listed plant habitat, to the extent this will not jeopardize firefighter or public safety). Fire retardant will not be used in occupied habitat.

Canada Lynx

The BLM will assess the potential impacts of actions proposed for implementation within lynx habitat at the project level. Any such actions within lynx habitat will implement the Lynx Conservation Assessment Strategy conservation measures and other necessary measures to avoid or minimize effects. Although the BLM is not a signatory to the Southern Rockies Lynx Amendment, new information and guidelines from this document will be utilized to minimize effects to lynx and their habitat. To protect lynx habitat, a Controlled Surface Use restriction will be placed on Established Lynx Linkage Corridors and Lynx Habitat within Lynx Analysis Units. Section 7 consultation will be completed at the project level for any action that ‘may affect’ Canada lynx or their habitat. The guidelines and conservation measures listed below are most pertinent to lynx habitat on BLM-managed lands within the KFO.

- Prescribed fire activities will not create permanent travel routes that facilitate snow compaction. Construction of permanent firebreaks on ridges or saddles will be avoided.
- Prescribed fire activities will consider design features to restore ecological processes and maintain or improve lynx habitat.
- Vegetation will be managed to mimic or approximate natural succession or disturbance processes, while maintaining the habitat components necessary for the conservation of lynx, where feasible and beneficial.
- Projects (e.g., habitat improvements, fuels reductions, harvests) will consider design features to retain and improve recruitment of an understory of small diameter conifers and shrubs preferred by hares.
- In aspen stands, the BLM will ensure habitat improvement projects or harvests favor regeneration of aspen.
- New permanent roads and trails that are likely to adversely affect lynx will be situated away from forested stringers within LAUs and linkages, where possible.
- Road densities and permanent facilities will be minimized in lynx linkages.
- In fire created openings, livestock grazing will be managed so impacts do not prevent shrubs and trees from regenerating.
- Livestock grazing in aspen stands will be managed to ensure sprouting and sprout survival sufficient to perpetuate the long-term viability of the clones.
- Livestock grazing in riparian areas and willow cars will be managed to contribute to maintaining or achieving a preponderance of mid- or late-seral stages, similar to conditions that will have occurred under historic disturbance regimes.
- Shrub-steppe habitats will be managed to maintain or achieve mid-seral or higher condition in the elevational ranges that encompass forested lynx habitat.

Mexican Spotted Owl

- The BLM will work with CPW and the USFWS to identify suitable Mexican spotted owl habitat on BLM-administered public lands. Surveys, according to the USFWS protocol, will be required prior to any disturbance-related activities that have been identified to have the potential to impact Mexican spotted owls in suitable habitat, unless current species occupancy and distribution information is complete and available.
- Trees greater than 9 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) should not be removed from suitable Mexican spotted owl “steep slope” and “canyon” habitats. Thinning of trees less than 9 inches DBH, fuels treatments, and prescribed fires will be allowed on a case-by-case basis to reduce fire hazard and improve habitat condition for owl prey. Habitat components that should be retained include snags (as appropriate), large logs (greater than or equal to 12 inches DBH), grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Exception: removal of trees, downed woody debris, snags, and other key habitat variables will be allowed if it is determined to be compatible with owl habitat management objectives documented through environmental analysis.
- Livestock grazing in protected and restricted Mexican spotted owl habitats will meet the BLM’s Colorado Standards for Public Land Health within key habitat areas (riparian areas, meadows and oak types) to provide for adequate levels of plant cover and forage for owl prey species. Monitoring in such areas will occur to determine current levels of use and detect any changes in the relative composition of herbaceous and woody plants.
- If any suitable habitat is found to be occupied by Mexican spotted owls, a Protected Activity Center (PAC) will be designated to protect important habitat.
- If a PAC is designated in the Decision Area, a No Surface Occupancy requirement will be applied to that entire area.
- Permitted activities, such as prescribed fires, fuels reduction, new Special Recreation Permits, etc., may occur within a PAC, if not likely to impact nest success. Separate Section 7 consultation will be required.
- No new facilities or trails that are likely to impact nest success will be permitted within PACs.
- Travel management within PACs will be evaluated and seasonal closures will be implemented, if necessary.
- The presence and intensity of existing recreational activities (e.g., hiking, climbing, OHV use) within PACs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Seasonal closures will be implemented, if necessary.
- Within “restricted” habitats (as defined in the recovery plan), management priority should be placed on reducing risks to Mexican spotted owl habitat. Forest habitats will be managed on an uneven-aged system.

North Platte River and Colorado River Species

- The BLM will continue to abide by the Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) for Colorado River water depletions (PBO #ES/GJ-6-CO-08-F-0006 and (PBO #ES/GJ-6-CO-08-F-0010), and continue to participate in the Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.
- The BLM will continue to abide by the June 16, 2006, PBO and the 2010 Memorandum of Agreement with the USFWS for North Platte River water depletions.
- The BLM will continue participation in the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP).

Greenback (Lineage GB) Cutthroat Trout

- As a member of the greenback cutthroat trout recovery team, the BLM will continue to monitor and improve habitat, and work cooperatively with partner agencies to implement actions that ultimately lead to the removal of Lineage GB cutthroat trout from the Endangered Species list.
- The BLM will maintain or enhance habitat for all known genetically pure Lineage GB cutthroat trout populations.
- The BLM will prohibit in-channel work in all occupied native cutthroat trout (Lineage CR and Lineage GB) streams during spring spawning periods of April 1 to August 1.
- A Section 7 consultation will be conducted for any grazing permit renewals in allotments containing occupied habitat for Lineage GB trout.
- The BLM will avoid surface occupancy or permanent surface disturbance within a minimum buffer distance of 325 horizontal feet for all occupied Lineage GB and Lineage CR waters, to protect water quality, fish habitat, aquatic and riparian habitat. For perennial streams, the buffer will be measured from the ordinary high-water mark (bank-full stage).
- Stream crossings will be designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts to occupied Lineage GB and Lineage CR waters, to protect water quality, fish habitat, aquatic and riparian habitat.